DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 202 245 FL 012 329

TITLE Diagnosis and Intervention in Bilingual Special Education: Searching for New Alternatives. Proceedings. Publication #11704-39-300-1-80.

INSTITUTION Massachusetts State Dept. of Education, Boston. Bureau of Special Education.

PUB DATE 10 May 78

NOTE 54p.; Revised versions of papers presented at the statewide conference of the Bilingual Special Education Planning Project (Boston, MA, May 10, 1978).

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC03 Plus Postage.

DESCRIPTORS *Bilingual Education; Bilingualism; Bilingual Students; Cultural Pluralism; Early Experience; Educa ional Needs; Educational Resources; Elementary Secondary Education; *English (Second Language); *Exceptional Persons; *Language Proficiency; Parent Child Relationship; Reading Difficulties; Screening Tests; Sociolinguistics; *Special Education; Testing; Vocational Education

IDENTIFIERS *Limited English Speaking

ABSTRACT

The following articles, edited versions of the principal speakers' presentations on bilingual special education, are presented: (1) "Cultural Diversity: Implications for Educational Change," by Dr. William Parker; (2) "Criteria for Identification, Placement, and Transfer of Transitional Bilingual Students," by Yolanda Ulloa; (3) "How to Utilize the Resources Available at the National Assessment and Dissemination Center at Lesley College," by George De George; (4) "A Model for Kindergarten and First Grade Screening of Non-English Speaking and Bilingual Children," by Marjorie K. Delgado; (5) "A Parent-Child Model of Early Intervention," by Diane Franklin; (6) "Process for Training Teachers in the Assessment of Language Proficiency of Bilingual Children," by C. Freytes and C. Rivera; (7) "Sociolinguistic Dimensions of Bilingual Assessment," by Dr. Alvino Fantini; (8) "Special Education for the Hispanic Child: A Ten Point Action Plan," by Manuel Sedo; and (9) "Vacational Education for the Bilingual Student with Special Needs," by Carol Denker. (AMH)

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DIAGNOSIS AND INTERVENTION IN BILINGUAL SPECIAL EDUCATION: SEARCHING FOR NEW ALTERNATIVES

MAY 10, 1978

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A Special Project of the

Massachusetts Department of Education

Division of Special Education

Bureau of Program Development and Evaluation

1979

Preface

On May 10, 1978, the Bilingual Special Education Planning Project sponsored a statewide conference on Diagnosis and Intervention in Bilingual Special Education: Searching for New Alternatives. Educators from forty-seven communities attended this conference, the purpose of which was to highlight some interesting programs and ideas in Bilingual Special Education in Massachusetts.

The articles contained here were taken from the principle speakers' presentations. They were written and edited by the speakers and reflect their individual styles.

Director
Bilingual Special Education Project

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We would like to thank everyone for their participation and help in making the conference a success. Special thanks to David Noriega, for his careful coordination and organization of the conference; to Gene Thayer, Director of the Secondary Project, and Mary Lu Ferrara for her assistance and input; to David Riley and the Boston Project for their financial assistance; and also to Cynthia Gilles and the Manpower Project for their staff support and many ideas.

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CRITERIA FOR IDENTIFICATION, PLACEMENT, AND TRANSFER OF TRANSITIONAL BILINGUAL STUDENTS

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Criteria for Identification, Placement, and Transfer of Transitional Bilingual Students

To establish a comprehensive identification, placement and transfer policy for the bilingual students, the Title VC Committee composed of Administrators, Bilingual, ESL and regular classroom teachers, after a thorough study, recommended a series of tests to be used as part of the criteria to comply with the TBE state guidelines.

I. Identification and Placement

Elementary Students

Elementary school students whose home language is other than English will be identified and assessed following the procedures listed below:

A. September survey where children of different ethnolinguistic groups are identified.

B. At the time of registration an interview with the parents by the principal, counselor or the community liaison will take place to obtain relevant data and home language information. If necessary, a home visit will be made.

C. Individual interview with the student in the home language by a bilingual teacher will take place to determine language preference usage and cross-checking of home language information.

D. Review of documents and transcripts of the student by a bilingual teacher. This will include: school marks, teacher's anecdotal records and judgments, data from social agencies. This will further evaluate language and academic background.

E. Individual interview in English by a qualified ESL teacher to make a first assessment of the student's knowledge of the English language. This will cross-check language preference.

F. Assessment of language dominance and comprehension, oral production, and reading of English and the home language when necessary. The tests listed below will be used.

G. Observation of the child by ESL and bilingual teachers and/or classroom teacher for a period of at least two weeks.

1. For Grades K - 1

The Cuesta is recommended for use with children for whom no English ability is assumed according with the results of the initial interview. Children who can not successfully pass the Cuesta should be placed in the TBE program. (Passing score for the Cuesta is 30.)

The Bilingual Syntax Measure (BSM) is used with students for whom some English skills are assumed by the initial interview or children who pass the Cuesta. (Passing score for the BSM is level 5. When level 4

is achieved the BSM in the home language will be used to assess language dominance of Spanish, Portuguese, or Italian children. If there is no instrument available for other linguistic minorities, this issue will be determined by an observation technique.

2. For Grades 2 and 3

The same procedure as described for Grades K - 1 would be followed. Children of Grade 2 who pass the Bilingual Syntax Measure with a level 4 or 5 will take the BSM in the home language to assess language dominance of Spanish, Portuguese, or Italian children. If there is no instrument available for other linguistic minorities, this issue will be determined by an observation technique. The Gates-MacGinitie Reading Test Primary Form A will be used to assess reading skills in English for students.

Children of Grade 3 who pass the BSM with a level 4 or 5 will also take the BSM in the home language to assess language dominance and the Gates-MacGinitie Reading Test Form B.

3. For Grades 4 - 6

The modified version of the Michigan Oral Language Production Test will be used to assess comprehension and oral production. Children who can not successfully pass the the Michigan will be enrolled in a bilingual program. (Passing score for the Michigan at this level is 42.) When a score of 35 and up is achieved, the Michigan Oral Language Test version in the home language will be used to assess language dominance of Spanish and Portuguese children. If there is no instrument available for other linguistic minorities, this issue will be determined by an observation technique.

The Gates-MacGinitie Test Form C and CS will be used to assess reading skills for Grades 4 - 6.

The examination of records, interviews and testing will be made within the first week of the students' arrival by an established bilingual team formed by the principal, Bilingual Supervisor and the bilingual ESL teachers. The final placement will be made on the basis of:

1. Examination of records.
2. Evaluation of interviewers.
3. Test results.
4. Examination of any other relevant data.
5. Feedback from the observing teachers.

The student who has been identified as being of "limited English ability" will be enrolled in the bilingual educational program. Within ten days after the placement, a letter in English and in the first language of the student will be sent to the parents or guardians by the Supervisor of Bilingual Education. This letter will inform them of the student's enrollment in the program and will provide a brief and simple description of the program and the parent's

rights. If deemed necessary, a visit will be made to the home by the community liaison person to further explain the program and its goals.

Through the September bilingual census, the Bilingual Supervisor will identify students of linguistic minorities in schools where there are no bilingual services. The bilingual department will evaluate the students and in consultation with the principals, the Bureau of Pupil Services and with parental consent will assign the student to the nearest school with bilingual services. When a student is assigned to a school outside of the district, a special permit will be obtained and transportation arrangements will be made.

If a student of a home language other than English registers at any other time in a school that does not have bilingual services, the principal will contact the Supervisor of Bilingual Education and the above described procedure will be followed.

II. Withdrawal from Bilingual Program

Parents have the right to withdraw their children from the bilingual program within thirty (30) days after placement. After such time, they may withdraw only at the end of each one-half year term or with permission of the teacher of Transitional Bilingual Education.

III. Transference to the Standard Program

All students who have achieved a level of proficiency in English as measured by the assessment instruments listed for each level, as well as achievement instruments used to measure their cognitive growth or who have completed, successfully, three years in the bilingual program will be eligible for transfer to the standard program.

At the end of each school year, the bilingual and ESL teachers will submit a list of students recommended for transference to the principal of the school. The principal will call the bilingual study team formed by himself, the Bilingual Supervisor and the bilingual and ESL teachers. If this team agrees with the transfer, it will propose a flexible program for each student for the following year and will establish a follow-up process to make certain the adjustment is successful.

Parent's participation will be requested through a letter in English and the home's native language informing them about the purpose, time and place of the meeting.

When such a transfer is recommended, a letter will be sent to the parent or guardian 15 days before the transfer takes place. The parent must sign the consent and return it to the school where it should be filed with the cummulative records.

No student may be transferred from the bilingual to the standard curriculum before spending three years in the program unless the following occurs:

The parent requests such a transfer under legal specifications or the Supervisor of Bilingual

Education requests such a transfer and it is approved by the Transitional Bilingual Bureau of the Massachusetts Department of Education and the parent.

IV. Follow-up Process to Transference

The bilingual teacher and the standard teacher will continuously review the progress of a student who has been transferred to the standard program. At the end of one month in this program, the results of the review and evaluation will be given to the principal of the school. The principal will place a copy in the student's file and send a copy to the Bilingual Supervisor.

If progress is not favorable before or at the one-month follow-up period, the standard program teacher will recommend through the principal a program re-evaluation by the bilingual study team.

HOW TO UTILIZE THE RESOURCES AVAILABLE AT THE NATIONAL ASSESSMENT AND DISSEMINATION CENTER AT LESLEY COLLEGE

George De George
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How to Utilize the Resources Available at the National Assessment and Dissemination Center at Lesley College

This is an information session on the National Dissemination Center, what we are, the services we offer, and the products we sell. The products are mainly curriculum materials in Spanish, French, Portuguese, Greek and Chinese, and also some other languages. I would like to talk about the Center and National Network. I shall describe the three types of Centers in the Network, the functions they perform, and the types of services that they can offer to you.

The Network is in its third year. There are about 40 centers throughout the country funded under ESEA Title VII. There are three dissemination centers of which ours is one. Our basic purpose is to publish books for children in bilingual classrooms, which we do in a variety of languages. We receive the books from material development centers, which do the developing. Ideally there has been a needs assessment which indicates in what areas books are needed. The prices are quite modest and we sell at cost. Basically, we are a federally funded publishing house. We also offer a collection of two hundred tests. They are mainly in ESL, Spanish, and Portuguese. We do have a few in French, which come from the projects in Northern New England and Louisiana, as well as some in Greek and Chinese. We don't have too much in the area of Bilingual Special Education as yet. Boston University's Resource Center has more Bilingual Special Education materials than we do. Marie Lombardo is now in charge of that centers' collection.

We have a large materials library. It contains bilingual materials in many languages, including native American languages at all grade levels. The holdings for the elementary level are somewhat greater and fall into three categories: project developed, commercially published, and network produced materials. Spanish, Portuguese, and French are our biggest holdings. The Spanish holdings tend to be Mexican or Chicano oriented, although more and more Puerto Rican oriented materials are now appearing. We have three material assessors - one in Spanish, Portuguese, and French. They are available for you to speak with on specific materials.

We also have a great deal of research in our library on: testing, bilingual education (in general), ESL, and textbooks on methodology. We also have tests and some material lists which are free and can be sent. We have a research librarian who will help you when you come to the Center, however, the Center does not have a lending policy. We can not reproduce and sell those materials that are copyrighted.

Now let's talk about the material development centers in New England. There is one in Bedford, New Hampshire, which writes materials in French. Another close center is in New York (South Bronx) which works on materials in Spanish. They are in the process of developing a sixth grade social studies curriculum on the Carribean area. There is also work on a kindergarten and first grade curriculum, too, in Greek, Italian and Russian. You don't usually deal directly with material development centers, instead the materials come to the dissemination centers and we pass it onto the public. There is now a newly funded Portuguese materials development center at Brown University in Providence, Rhode Island.

There are two resource centers in New England which you can deal with. They provide teacher training services on the classroom level. Title VII programs are their priority, however, if time is left they will service TBE programs.

One is at Boston University, it deals with Spanish, Greek, French, and Passamoquoddy. You can request information and teacher training. They also offer mini-courses from time to time. The resource center in Providence, Rhode Island, deals in Spanish, Portuguese, and Italian. They offer the same services and have the same priorities as Boston University. It is known as the Multilingual-Multicultural Training and Resource Center and is housed at Rhode Island College. Maria Luisa Vallejo is a special resource person there.

Resource centers also pilot test new material, which is usually done in classrooms prior to publishing. You can get involved in this testing of materials if you wish. Contact the Boston University or Providence Resource Centers.

One publication I would like to mention is our Bilingual Journal. It is published quarterly and contains various articles on bilingual education and reviews of books and curriculum materials.

A MODEL FOR KINDERGARTEN AND FIRST GRADE SCREENING OF NON-ENGLISH SPEAKING AND BILINGUAL CHILDREN

Marjorie Kanter Delgado
Bilingual Speech and Language Pathologist

A Model for Kindergarten and First Grade Screening of Non-English Speaking and Bilingual Children

The development of a screening program for non-English speaking and bilingual children presents some special problems. We must first ask, are the tests being used in English appropriate for the population for which they were designed? Then we must ask, if they are appropriate for the intended population, are they appropriate for the minority culture population? The following is an outline of issues to consider and procedures to follow.

1. The parent interview should be conducted in the parent's native and/or stronger language. Parent interview questions should include:
   a. Where was the child born?
   b. Where has the child lived? How long did the child live in each location?
      With whom did s/he live?
   c. Who presently lives in the home?
   d. To which language(s) has the child been exposed?
   e. What language(s) does the child presently hear?
   f. What language(s) does the child use? If more than one, how much time with each and to whom?
   g. How does the parent feel about the child's language(s) of instruction?
   h. Does the parent speak English? How well?
   i. Does the family plan to remain on the U.S. mainland?

2. The language(s) to be used during the assessment must be determined. The screening must be conducted in:
   a. The native language.
   b. Bilingually, if the child has been exposed to more than one language.

3. A procedure for dealing with two languages must be established.
   a. Do not code switch except when the information sought is the child's ability to deal specifically with this task.
   b. Look at functioning in one language at a time.
   c. In analyzing the results:
      (1) Look at L_1
      (2) Look at L_2
      (3) Look at the sum total of L_1 and L_2 (quantity and quality)
      (4) Look at and compare the strengths and weaknesses in the areas of acquired information and processing for both L_1 and L_2.

4. The importance of dialectal differences and language changes must be considered.

5. Universals and differences in the following areas must be determined and applied to test development and analysis.
   a. Cultural
   b. Linguistic (structural and developmental)
   c. Experiential

6. There may be a lack of appropriate tests and normative information.
   a. Tests developed in the native country have not been developed for the bilingual-bicultural child living in the United States.
   b. Appropriate tests must be developed and normative information collected.
   c. If existing tests are used, local norms must be developed and adaptations made.

7. There may be a lack of bilingual-bicultural professionals trained in the specialist areas.
   a. It may be necessary for an interpreter, paraprofessional or classroom teacher to do some or all of the screening.
   b. There are limitations in working with paraprofessionals and/or through an interpreter. Training and careful supervision must be provided.
   c. Standard procedures should be followed.

8. The evaluator(s) must be:
   a. Bilingual-bicultural
   b. Well versed in the issues discussed in items 1-7.

Planning for a screening program should include:

1. Definition of the population to be screened. Who? Why?
2. Location of the population.
3. Who will do the testing? Qualifications.
4. When will the screening program be carried out?
5. How much time is needed per child?
6. Where will the screening be conducted? What facility requirements exist?
7. How will record keeping be handled?
8. What will the screening include? Why?
9. What materials will be needed?

The screening should include:

1. Home assessment
2. Medical history and examination
3. Gross motor development
4. Fine motor development
5. Peripheral hearing and vision activity
6. Bilingual speech and language development
7. Cognitive development
8. Neurological indicators

The CIP[1] (Comprehensive Identification Process), a commercial screening test, is recommended as a point of reference. The manual is well organized and discusses a step by step procedure for setting up and implementing a screening program. The instrument is available in English only. The manual comments regarding non-English speaking children are poor.

The screening can be designed and used to serve the following purposes:

1. Provide baseline information for later use.
   a. Is the child gaining or losing ground throughout his school experience?
   b. Is the program meeting the individual student's needs?
   c. Is the program meeting the groups needs?
   d. Learning for the future. Did we make the right decisions?
2. Help with short term and long term planning for both individual students and groups.
   a. To help plan for prevention of possible future problems.

b. To identify and provide for those children who fall into the category of:
   (1) High risk
   (2) Severe developmental delay
   (3) Disordered development
   (4) Specific medical needs
   (5) Other special needs

c. To provide educational placement.
   (1) What program will best meet the child's needs re: learning styles/ strategies?
   (2) Which language(s) for instruction? For which subjects? How much time?

3. To collect data for the development of local/regional norms.

Summary

When developing a screening program for non-English speaking and bilingual children:

1. Consider developmental universals.
2. Consider developmental differences (cultural, linguistic, and experiential).
3. Carefully determine the purpose of the screening program, the information sought and why this particular information is being sought.

[1] CIP Comprehensive Identification Process, R. Reid Zehrbach, PhD., Scholastic Testing Service, Inc., Bensenville, Illinois, 60106.

[2] 766 Regulations
   a. Reference to non-discriminatory services: p. II, 6(203.0), 8(209.0)
   b. Reference to screening: pp. 12-15

A PARENT-CHILD MODEL OF EARLY INTERVENTION

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A Parent-Child Model of Early Intervention

As educators, we share a concern for educating all children to the limit of their potential, so that they can grow to lead happy and useful adult lives. The bilingual child, at best, has to integrate not only different words for objects and acts, but also language-implied differences of emphasis, values, and meaning itself in order to become educated for success in our English-speaking, Anglo-influenced society. In a sense, then, I am assuming that bilingual children are particularly vulnerable and have special needs to some extent at least - beyond the English-speaking - in certain areas of their functioning. Learning styles vary from culture to culture, for instance; in part they are dictated by child-rearing techniques "normal" in a particular language and cultural group. Furthermore, a boy or girl's image or concept of himself, and his notion of why someone speaks to another and how a child or grownup ought to respond, as well as his ability to communicate verbally and otherwise - these things too emerge from the very early training a child receives through his home culture and language. The bilingual child must make sense of the educational structure and goals he finds in school somehow, and also make sense of himself to his peers and teachers. A big task!

How can we help him? My own perspective, now that I am a social worker as well as an educator, has shifted in recent years to focus on helping a child learn to do and be what he wants (assuming it's socially acceptable) in spite of the obstacles that may be in his way. We should anticipate common obstacles, if we can, and think of what would be most likely to help him learn, when it should be done, and who should do it.

My feeling is that many "special needs" in the sense of deficits and failure to learn adequately in school can be avoided to a very large extent by helping parents to teach their children to enjoy thinking and learning about their world at the time children first begin to speak their dominant language, about 18 - 30 months. Like other children, the bilingual child needs the ability to build concepts, and practice in doing it, by the time he reaches school. He needs a history of success in learning at home, so that his self-confidence as a person and member of a family and cultural group carries him through the experience of gaining another language in school, if need be.

I would like to tell you about a program called the Parent-Child Home Program, which might be a model for serious consideration and possible adaptation for school administration to address many of the special needs of bilingual children. As a staff member of Family Counseling Service (Region West) in Newton, I have been associated with the program for six years and the last three as Coordinator. It is still quite small, serving 42 families living in Newton, Waltham, Wellesley, and Natick, but from the beginning 8 years ago, its aim has been to overcome educational disadvantages for children. Entering the two-year program anywhere from 18-30 months, eligible children were those demographically "at risk" for later school success. A requirement is that parents have low income for size of their family and low education for both parents (high school or less) bilingual children always having additional priority. Family profile varies widely, but often families are large and/or very young, overwhelmed with financial need, sometimes discouraged and isolated. In Newton the bilingual families are most often Italian; in Waltham they are Spanish speakers, mostly from rural districts, or French Canadian. The families whom we work with as a parent (usually mother) and child combination called a dyad, are offered the program by outreach most often, although friends and relations are beginning to call

and ask for service now. Most families are referred by outside sources (health care agencies, school, churches, Welfare, Headstart, etc.) but we also did some canvassing through census tract information.

At any rate, we offer parents one of two programs with an identical goal - to help the mother, using play with toys and books, help her child to do better when he gets to school. Either program is provided free of cost to the parents, "no strings attached", although at first some parents find this hard to believe. Both are two year programs and take place from November to late May.

The original program is carried on in the family's home twice a week at the parent's convenience half an hour each time, by a trained "home visitor". On the first visit of the week the visitor draws the parent and child into a demonstration and play session which helps the parent see how he or she can use this item to have fun with the child at the same time the child is being helped to learn. Effort is made to connect material in toys and books (round, blue, table, clock for telling time, happy looks on faces, etc.) to items in the family's home. As soon as possible in a session the Home Visitor drops into a secondary role, encouraging the parent to take over, use her own words and approach to things. The second session each week is a review session to encourage, reinforce and to clear up any questions. Without direct teaching the home visitor not only models techniques of talking and playing that facilitate learning, but her whole attitude is one of expecting curiosity, maximizing the enjoyment for grownups as well as child, and being intensely respectful, friendly and collaborative with the mother. Warmth present in the relationship of mother and child is capitalized on, although this does not exclude appropriate moves toward independence for the child.

The group program, called Funschool, is currently available only in Newton, has certain unique features to offer and costs somewhat less to administer but is not appropriate for everyone. Briefly, a group of 12 mothers meet once a week with me as their group leader in a local school building in a room donated by the principal, who has seen the results for Program children. Mothers may be in their first or second year of the Program. The group leader demonstrates and talks about the book or toy for each age group for that week, play-acts with members of the group, and encourages mothers to talk about the success of last week's toy or book with the child and to help each other with ideas. Gradually they become models for one another and a supportive group feeling develops, much as it develops between home visitor and mother at home. In each case the mother's confidence as parent, at least, grows. While mothers meet together for an hour, their children (including siblings who may be at home), are babysat in another large room of the school with a trained supervisor and for young teenagers who use this experience as field work for a "human growth and development" course. Mothers rejoin their children for the last half hour to enjoy the toy or book together, Coordinator acting as consultant to each dyad in turn.

At present about a third of our families are bilingual. We try to have native speakers as home visitors for bilingual families. Home visitors meet in small groups for supervision with the coordinator and 2 other supervisors, one of whom is bilingual. In the Funschool the two bilingual mothers started with some small degree of English, sit close to each other, and the leader invites and encourages them to contribute their own words (and ideas, as they feel more confident) for what we are working with. The result has been fully as benefi-

cial for bilingual mothers in both programs as for English speakers according to them, and both programs report a real cultural exchange as a byproduct. However, the group program is not the answer to everything, for bilingual families or others. Although group members praise their chance to form new associations and friendships, there are still mothers who feel too depressed, too scared, too busy or have too many kids to feel that they can make the effort to be at a particular place every week.

To answer the question of the illiterate mother, she is equally successful with her child. She may need extra encouragement from her home visitor or group leader, but she needs only to talk about the pictures and ideas in a book, for instance, with her child to help him learn. Along with the other mothers, she can be shown how to talk about shape, color, narrative, size, cause and result, spatial relationships, categories, suspense and resolution. The connections between what's in the stimulus material (book or toy) and what's in the home, need to come in the mother's own style and language. The child gains knowledge with her about what's going on in the world too as she finds she can communicate what interests her, from what it feels like to live on a farm where she came from, to a new experience in the city. We try also to encourage her to listen, as we show her we do, to what her child says and what he thinks. But always we emphasize having a good time together, talking, and learning.

For the ambitious mother, it may be a struggle for her not to be too serious or "pushy" with her child, so that the fun disappears. For the distracted mother, it may be an effort to focus on the interchange of talk or of doing things together. Still, one of our assumptions is that any mother can be a real agent for change in her child's life if she knows what to do. The other assumption is that every mother really wants the best for her child - and I have never seen that denied. A particular parent may really have a hard time coming up with what's needed, but it's up to us to help her give it to him.

In terms of theoretical background, let me first say that our program is a replication of the Mother-Child Home Program, created and continually researched by Dr. Phyllis Levenstein, a psychologist associated with Family Service of Nassau County of New York in 1965, as a follow-up on the somewhat disappointing results of the Headstart Program. She used the theories of Jerome Bruner about development of learning, and the works of John Bowlby and Harold Skeels in regard to the importance of early material influence on emotional stability and in cognition, to determine the starting age of the child in the program and the criteria to use for her design. Briefly stated, the work of Bruner, a psychologist, (more recently corraborated by a developmental biologist, Dr. Epstein of Brandeis) states that the period of 15 - 30 months is a crucial time of life for learning in a human being.

An enormous amount of learning takes place at this time along with and indeed associated with language development. The most primitive kind of thinking, which Bruner calls "enactive" and refers to thinking of something (and feeling) with the whole body - as in the language of dance and sexual language that persists later into life, becomes consolidated. At about 1½ years, a child begins to form pictures of things in his mind, to be able at this point to connect names with the pictures and thereby hold onto the concept. This process Bruner calls ikonic thinking. Once this becomes firmly established

somewhere between 2 - 3, a child gradually becomes able to categorize the pictures, draw inferences about cause and result - in short, learns to think abstractly, a process Bruner refers to as symbolic thinking. This last ability makes school learning more possible - allows the child to wait for results of his hard work, to anticipate them so that in the end he can have the satisfaction of achievement. In this way he can reward himself and receive recognition from others, so vital to all of us to feel good about ourselves.

Without this ability he may face the long task of "unlearning" that the good child is the one who stays out of the way - and learn laboriously how to integrate objects with ideas. Or he may even miss this part of life entirely.

Phyllis Levenstein decided to approach the needs of disadvantaged children through their parents. Part of her decision was based on Skeels' successful work with foster parents and orphaned children in England during the Second World War, but she also reasoned that parents are the ongoing adults in a child's world anyway, a constant source of teaching.

In addition, parents are more interested in a child than anyone else is likely to be, and care more about him than anyone else. The child loves his parents already: why not use an already existing close relationship to maximize the effect for the child? And as a side benefit, the parents will gain the pleasure of having been successful with their own child, thus raising their own self-esteem. It seems to me that we cannot do better than put tools in the hands of parents for the benefit of their children.

This program appeals to me for use with the bilingual child, especially one whom (for whatever reason) we suspect may be vulnerable to special needs. For one thing, techniques are applicable at a wide variety of starting points and continue at the child's own rate of learning. There is a multiple-sense approach possible and wide applicability to many home and cultural situations. Introduction of any language is as good as any other, because cognition is the goal, not just one particular language. But talking helps thinking. There is an emphasis on integration of thinking with experience as well, so important to the experience of a bilingual. There is even an opportunity for early diagnosis and instituting special emphasis in areas that seem to be developmentally behind.

Perhaps even more important to someone in my position is the inherent respect to the population in this approach. Ethically, I feel that it is most important to empower those most intimately connected with children - their own parents - so that they can turn the natural frustration of bilingual status into positive action to become a dominant member of the helping team.

PROCESS FOR TRAINING TEACHERS IN THE ASSESSMENT OF LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY OF BILINGUAL CHILDREN

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Process for Training Teachers in the Assessment of Language Proficiency of Bilingual Children

A major problem in bilingual education is to provide training for bilingual personnel responsible for diagnosing bilingual student's language competencies. In responding to this need, a language proficiency project was developed to train bilingual classroom teachers to:

a) identify language proficiency skills necessary for a student to perform in a monolingual or bilingual classroom;

b) identify and critically select appropriate standardized and/or criterion-referenced tests that measure the language skills necessary for proficiency; and

c) develop a language assessment procedure which includes process and instrumentation.

With respect to the first objective, teachers were trained to analyze language skills as outlined in Figure 1.* It illustrates the areas identified as necessary for overall language assessment. They include both the receptive and expressive areas of language that require mastery of phonology (sound), syntax (grammar), lexicon (vocabulary), and semantics (meaning).

Once the language areas to be assessed were identified, the second objective was met by training the teachers in testing. Specifically, they were trained to:

a) define objectives for testing in a specific language area;

b) review several test instruments in each language area; and

c) pilot test, and select one that best suits the test objectives.

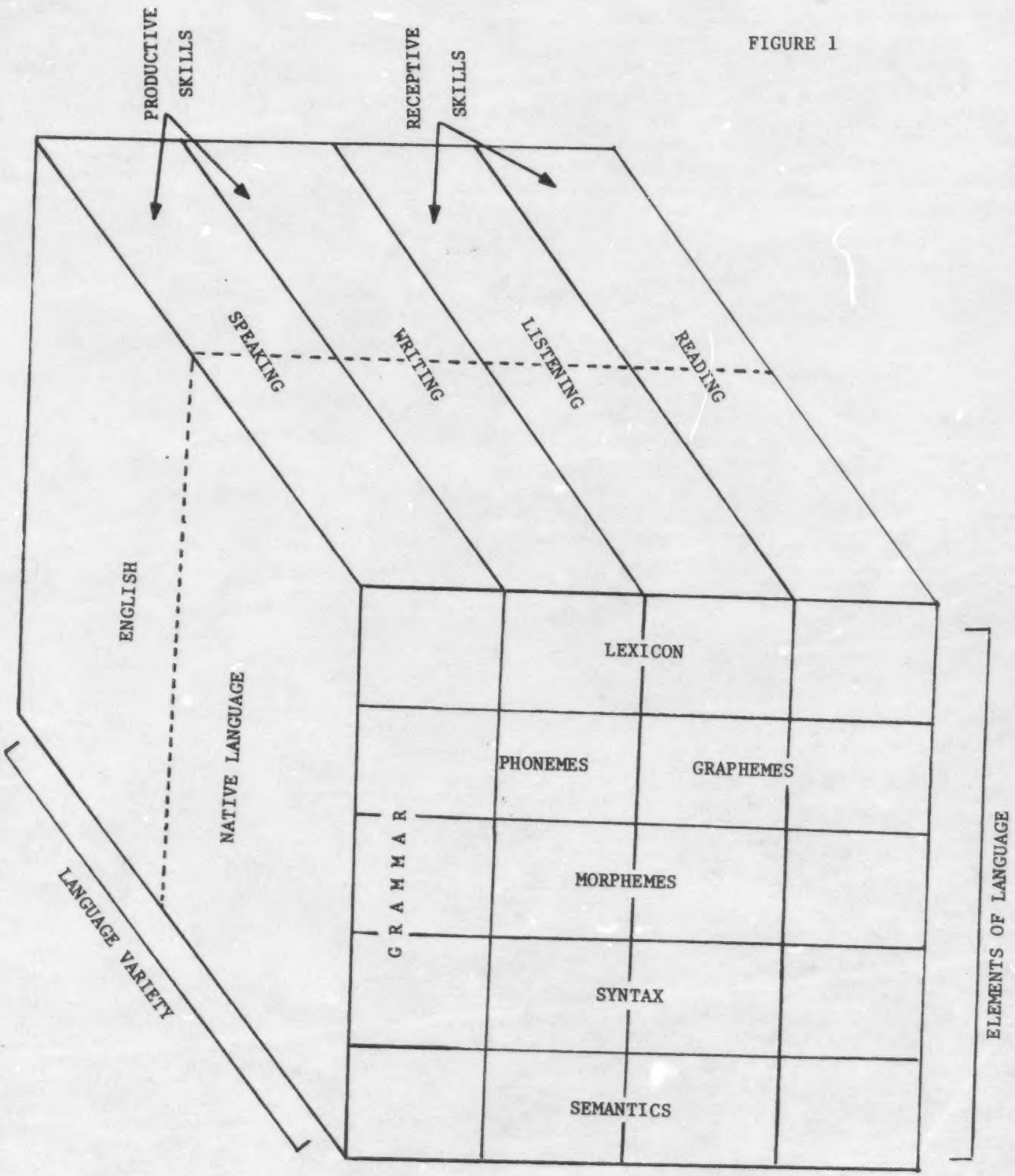
In order to make maximum use of skills, teachers were clustered according to grade level: K, 1-3, 4-6, 7-12. Once basic knowledge required to criticize tests was developed, each cluster of teachers individually assessed tests at their grade level in the major language area.

The third objective was met through a series of intense workshops. In order to assure uniformity, each cluster was assisted by graduate students familiar with the area of language proficiency testing. The materials developed and organized through this process were then duplicated for the district to implement on a pilot basis. Presently, the entire procedure is in the process of being field tested.

The final product, while important, is simply an outcome of a training process which will continue to dynamically evolve. In reality, the significance of the project is in the training received by the teachers and their input into the development of an assessment procedure.

(*) This model was initially used for the development of the English as a Second Language Assessment Battery (ESLAB).

FIGURE 1



Adapted from:

(Bordie, 1970; Macnamara, 1967; Cooper, 1968, 1976, cited in Cohen, 1975)

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SOCIOLINGUISTIC DIMENSIONS OF BILINGUAL ASSESSMENT

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Sociolinguistic Dimensions of Bilingual Assessment

Introduction: The Problem at Hand

In many school systems today, children with learning problems are fortunate to receive assistance from specialists in Special Education. However, although such specialists encounter a variety of problems of diverse origins - psychological, biological, even sociological - most are unfamiliar with the special needs of children who come from other than an English-speaking background. In systems where no bilingual program is available, bilingual children and those with limited English-speaking ability (LESA), are often treated along with other children who indeed have learning problems. The fact that limited or non-existent English seriously affects their interaction at school and ability to learn through English - a foreign language- is often not clearly understood. Attempts to assess the ability of such children when done in English further compounds our misconceptions and results in a wrongly prescribed course of scholastic action. The problem is clear - most specialists dealing with learning problems are not trained to deal with such cases; it is beyond their experience and knowledge. Yet, in schools without a bilingual program, LESA children are commonly given over to learning specialists, lacking anyone else who knows how to educate those with limited or no English. The numbers of such children vary greatly in each school, yet overall there seems to be an increase in recent years probably due in part to our increased awareness of this specialized need.

The result of this situation has been a cause to bring together Learning Specialists and Bilingual Education Specialists, their common concern being that of the non-English speakers and LESA children, and their special needs. Despite the label, we are realistically dealing with children who represent a wide latitude of linguistic behaviors instead of a single group, alike in their non-use of English. Recognizing this diversity, the Office of Civil Rights established several categories to characterize children's language patterns:

- monolingual, non-English
- predominantly speaks a language other than English
- bilingual (i.e., equal ease with both languages)
- predominantly speaks English, but some of another language
- monolingual English

Yet even with these five categories, those who work with children exposed to two languages, quickly recognize that they demonstrate a continuum of linguistic abilities ranging somewhere between the extremes of monolingual, non-English speakers to those completely monolingual in English. The rubric of non-English speaker, or LESA, although convenient, too often conceals the diversity of the children, the complexity of the problem, and the variety of possible solutions.

As important as it is to acknowledge the possible range of speech patterns,

is it to understand how the existence of a language other than English too often serves as a smoke screen concealing the talents of the child. In a scholastic situation which only values performance in English, there is little chance that children whose linguistic talents lack in English, can be properly and adequately assessed. The consequence is that children speaking other than English are commonly lumped together with others who have real learning problems in their own language.

Whereas we may properly expect that in any population of children, we can anticapate a normal bell curve in terms of abilities, it is unfortunate to find that it is only too commonly assumed that children who do not perform in English, are mostly at the bottom of any such curve. This is the danger of the "language filter" which often hides the true abilities of children. The monolingual, monocultural background of so many of our own school personnel does not help them to grasp the significance of this filter. Three brief anecdotes, taken directly from local public school experience, serve to underscore this fact:

- An elementary school in northern Vermont routinely places all French-speaking children with other "handicapped" needing special instruction. The teacher in charge has no knowledge of bilingualism, bilingual education, nor experience in teaching English as a second language.

- A department chairperson refused to test newly arrived students from the Azores in Portuguese to determine their scholastic level of ability, despite the availability of such a test. His intent was to "fit" the students into the existing system. Naturally they scored very low, without understanding that the problem was not intellectual ability but a language matter.

- A test administrator in Massachusetts refused to use an available Spanish version of the TOBE Test (Test of Basic Experiences) with entering kindergarten students whose dominant language was Spanish. The result was extremely low scores in areas of conceptual development and general intelligence, as measured through English. The children were "helped" in these areas, rather than first helping them with English.

A vivid way of grasping what these children were subjected to would be to administer similar tests to school personnel and test administrators in a foreign language which they know only partially, or not at all. There is simply no possible way to demonstrate one's intellect and conceptual development through a language which one does not speak fluently. It must be recognized that the child of five - in any language - comes to school with basic experiences and knowledge which he can only demonstrate in the language through which these were acquired. To the extent that his language matches that of the school system, his opportunity to demonstrate his abilities is optimal; but to the extent that his language does not match that of the school system, his opportunity is severely curtailed. This is the fundamental fact to recognize in dealing with the latter group. Our task therefore must be first and foremost to ascertain the child's level despite the filter of a different language. Separating ability from language therefore is the first task of anyone engaged in Special Education. Knowing whether the problem

is attributable to a learning disability or lack of knowledge of English, drastically affects the approach to be used in assisting the child through the educational process. However, understanding the difference between language and ability is only a first step. Other problems must still be faced, as for example:

(1) finding available and appropriate test instruments in languages other than English;

(2) determining how well available tests do what they purport to do;

(3) comparing the results of such tests with norms for tests in English to achieve accurate comparisons;

(4) interpreting the results of tests and using these as a basis for a course of action;

(5) understanding bilingualism and the bilingual child and hopefully viewing bilingualism/biculturalism in a positive context to enrich and enhance, rather than as a "problem" and a "handicap";

(6) sharing this information and understanding with other teachers accustomed to dealing only with English-speakers.

As we grapple with the practical problems of assessment and implementing courses of action for LESA and bilingual children, we must deal first with ignorance in so many areas. Our ignorance is one borne of a monolingual school system in a monolingual society. To some extent this is being rectified as we begin to acknowledge the existence of so many American children who come to us with a background other than English. As a result, research has increased tremendously in recent years which will enhance our understanding of the following:

- language and language use (sociolinguistic)
- the interrelations of language and social context
- social variables and the variability of linguistic form
- code switching and style shifting
- the effect of context upon language use
- the social dimensions of bilingualism

It is to these issues which I wish to speak, although sketchily, before going on to address the practical task of testing and evaluating, for the tests are in themselves instruments which are heavily affected by the social context of the test situation. Consequently it is imperative that we recognize that our task extends far beyond the administration of a test to an appreciation of the individual who shares neither our language nor culture.

Social Dimensions of Bilingualism

We have already noted that is is artificial to categorize the behavior of bilingual individuals, rather that their abilities lie along a continuum at whose opposite extremes lies the monolingual of language X and at the

other, the monolingual of language Y. Why then do we find so many differing, sometimes confusing, descriptions of bilinguals? In defining the bilingual, some have emphasized one's knowledge of two languages; others have stressed one's use; still others have described one's ability in the various skill areas of languages; and other have been primarily concerned with the degree of ability or proficiency in each. Today, it is commonly acknowledged, however, that there is no such thing as a person with equal knowledge, use, or proficiency in two or more languages, in all areas. It is much more appropriate to describe the individual bilingual, therefore, with a profile which accounts for several or all of these areas.

Our knowledge of bilingualism has also come to us from several different areas of discipline, each providing different perspectives, different insights. Psychologists, for example, have been primarily concerned with the relationship of bilingualism to intelligence; sociologists with languages in social contact, and the norms for language use; linguists with issues of interference which one language may exert upon another; and teachers and educators with the practical realities of approaches to educating children who are bilingual.

Yet so many of biases, prejudicies, attitudes and perspectives about bilingualism have been socially influenced. Given that heretofore we have viewed ourselves primarily as a monolingual nation, secure in our use of English as a world language spread through the economic and political power of several English speaking nations, our orientation to bilingualism was influenced accordingly. Although we are new to bilingualism, other nations have practiced bilingualism as a national policy throughout their history and these policies have in turn been reflected in their approaches to education. It is only in recent years that our own language policy - or lack of it - is being reexamined and many are considering cultural (and linguistic) pluralism as a viable system for our own society. Although these considerations seem only tangential to the concerns of the public school teacher, they, nonetheless, have a direct consequence upon all that we do.

We cannot dispel the effects of school policies and our own attitude on the development of the bilingual child. Schools are after all a major socializing force in the life of an individual and the policies of that institution and the attitudes of its staff are transcendental to the individual's development. Bilingualism is not an inherently good nor bad phenomenon in a linguistic sense, but only as valued by a social group at any point in time. Out and out animosity towards the language the child brings to school, when not English, will obviously exert considerable influence on the development and the self-esteem of the five year old, not to speak of the obliteration of his native tongue. In other words, the system has heretofore worked against bilingualism in favor of monolingual children. Our approach tends to make monolinguals out of bilinguals rather than the reverse which would seem so much more desirable. Such irony to waste such a resource, when so often within a few more years, we attempt to introduce second languages to our students with not nearly the success as in those earlier years. This leads to a related concern which is: what is the effect of social context on code differentiation; or put more simply, how is bilingual behavior fostered (or hindered)?

To become bilingual in the first place, one must have as a most basic condition exposure to at least two language systems. The second requirement is an awareness

of the basic social conditions which require the use of one language or the other; i.e., socially differentiated behavior - linguistically or otherwise. Studies have shown that language differentiation is produced at a very early age when both of the above conditions are present. By the onset of the second year, in fact, children have demonstrated their remarkable ability to separate two languages. The task, obviously, is not just a linguistic one, but a social one as well. The child learns to recognize which social circumstances demand the use of language X as opposed to language Y. Some of the social factors which early on trigger the switch are the presence of certain interlocutors (such as parents, teachers, peers), the setting (whether the home, the school or playground), the function of the interaction (whether a normal dialog, or say, one which has another purpose such as to shock, surprise, or amuse), and the form (as for example whether the child is engaged in story-telling, quoting, singing, etc.). Obviously these factors vary at each moment, adding to the complexity of each social situation. Nonetheless, the child is keenly aware of these factors and demonstrates this through his appropriate choice of each language at his disposition. Only one language will work for the child in each social circumstance and it is this fact which guides the child to behave "differentially" and therefore bilingually. So much overwhelming evidence that children are capable of appropriate linguistic discrimination dispels the notion that children get confused, or that they speak a mish-mosh, or that is is not good to expose children to several languages early on, not to mention the fact that there are millions of bilingual children throughout the world. Obviously complete separation of languages is a process which does not happen over night, however, the permissible use of two or more languages and consistency of circumstance in which each is used will foster true bilingualism; prejudice, negative experiences in the use of one or the other language, prohibitions in the form of scoldings or school policies will work against the full development of dual language acquisition in favor of whichever of the child's two languages is most supported in the most general way. Ultimately, it is to be recognized that bilingualism is not so much a linguistic concern as it is a social phenomenon.

The child's ability to switch languages or codes is also an indication of linguistic control in another area - that of linguistic styles. In fact, all children - monolingual or bilingual - are capable of changing their style of speaking in differing circumstances and in fact, do. The styles may not always be the preferred ones of the school, but they are styles acquired by the child in his life experiences up to that point. Once at school, most children are in the position of acquiring a new speech style, one appropriate to the formality of most classrooms. To the extent that they have already experienced styles which resemble those of the school, they have an easier time of it. To the extent they have not, they have a gap to bridge, but one which they can achieve assuming their self-respect is not attacked nor maligned.

Although the specifics of each style may vary from child to child (in accordance with the cultural background, economic level, and diversity of pre-school experience), some of the styles probably most common to the five-year-old are those for addressing peers, another for adults, and another for younger children. Witness the fact that children speak to each other in a manner not used with adults. Furthermore, children accustomed to being around younger infants often develop a baby talk style which is certainly not the same speech

used with others. This ability to modify linguistic output in accordance with varying social situations is similar to the ability to change complete language codes as required in each situation.

The need for several speech styles is very much a part of any person's language development. All children do indeed learn to modify their speech and acquire the appropriate styles - and the codes, if needed - for the social circumstances in which they find themselves. As they enter school, a new style is often added to those already acquired in the child's earlier years. Styles of speech evolve in accordance with the demands of varying social situations. The more diverse the situations which the child experiences, the more styles he acquires. The goal is the same as with adults - to be able to express oneself properly in each situation. Consequently, even adult speakers are in the process of modifying their speech, adopting new styles for new circumstances, and sometimes discarding old styles no longer appropriate for their evolving experiences in life. Speaking two different languages, in a very real sense then, is similar to adjusting one's speech styles. All human beings are capable of doing just this, given the appropriate social situation and the desire to identify as a member of the situation. Lacking the desire for social identification - or being barred from that possibility - inevitably results in the retention and use of a language or style not deemed "appropriate". Hence, the acquisition of language habits is inextricably linked with the social scene. The problem is never merely a linguistic one which can be dealt with within a vacuum, but language behavior as only one dimension of the social interaction which takes place.

It is often the case that bilingualism is attacked on the grounds that bilingual speakers, especially young children, are at a disadvantage and unable to learn either language correctly. Parents are sometimes asked to "cooperate" with the schools and the teachers in the best interests of the child and only speak English at home. Not only is this an assault upon the cultural existence of the family, but also nothing could be farther from the truth. The child <u>is</u> capable of acquiring two - even more languages - at the same time. In fact, this is the opportune time for him to do so. The child is also entirely capable of separating languages, if the circumstances of his environment so warrant. What is more likely the case is that the role models the child follows - often adults who themselves do not consistently separate the two languages - provide the examples which the child follows. What the child must learn when beginning school, then, is that in some places (at home in his neighborhood) he must speak only language X with some individuals, and possibly X and Y with others. At school, however, only language Y is possible. The key to language separation, then, is consistency of language usage under given conditions, and continuity of exposure to the language or languages in question. Whatever the pattern of use may be for the individual child, he is able to discern and differentiate the code for each situation, although it is normal to experience an initial phase of language mixing while still in the sorting process. In some cases the child may have gone through this sorting at a very early age so that by two to three years of age he is already functionally bilingual. In other cases where the child was exposed primarily to only one language in his neighborhood different from that of the school, this sorting process may be prompted only after contact with this English-speaking institution. Given a healthy, unprejudiced atmosphere at school, the child will soon demonstrate his capabilities. But given a negative, uncomprehending environment, the

child may soon display signs of confusion, rejection, lack of identification, which will ultimately militate against his developing languages, not to mention his self-image. Ultimately this will cause deleterious effects upon his adjustment to school and his potential to learn.

We must also understand that what is often pointed to as a negative aspect of bilingualism - the influence of one language upon the other - may simply be momentary evidence of a child going through the sorting process. Given his limited knowledge and use of English, it is natural that a child will tend to draw upon resources from his dominant tongue. This is especially so when others in his presence also understand both languages. It would be unreasonable to think that a child struggling for expression might invoke only some of his linguistic resources - and the more limited one at that. Hence, children logically attempt to use everything at their command. As the child's second language continues to develop within the school context, his reliance upon that language will also increase.

So much has been written about "interference" with its implicity negative connotations that it is important to stress the positive transference which the bilingual can also control to his communicative and learning advantage. First of all, it goes without saying that no matter how much the young bilingual must struggle initially with his new language, his limited English ability is in addition to a fully developed mode of communication in his first tongue - as fully developed as for any monolingual child of the same background. Too often it is forgotten that the child does indeed have a fully developed mode at his level. What English-speakers are witnessing is a second tongue in development - an alternate mode of expression, a second communication system for use in the world. Secondly, transference is not a haphazard and uncontrolled phenomenon as is normally thought by monolingual speakers. The developing bilingual child gains increasing control of his ability to switch from the use of one mode to another. Often the switch is intentionally contrived to produce specific effects such as to shock, amuse, surprise, to convey humor, or to exclude or include others. Often the bilingual can achieve a far richer range of communicative expression especially when switching is done in the presence of other bilinguals able to appreciate the mix and use of two codes. Thirdly, bilinguals may use one language to explore, explain, and enrich their knowledge of the other. For example, they may find explanations for an expression in one language by comparison with the second; likewise they can create nuances, expand vocabularies by comparing cognate words, and perform a variety of other mental activities possible because of the existence of the two systems. While learning to read, it has been observed how bilingual children sometimes accelerate word attack skills because they can sound out English words by relying on the phonemic-graphemic relationships extent in their native Spanish, Italian, or Portuguese.

This attempt to phoneticize English - in a manner not so fascile for English-speaking children- leads to discovery of the word which is then "adjusted" to its known English pronunciation. Knowledge of a language other than English -often related to other tongues, as among the Romance family - permits the possibility of grasping even other forms of expression as for example, a Spanish-speaker being close to comprehending Portuguese, a third mode. Comprehension of two codes often leads to an awareness and acceptance of other "strange" or "deviant" manners. Witness, conversely, the reactions

of monolingual children who encounter people speaking a foreign language for the first time. Finally, the bilingual child is not just a speaker, but a member of two cultures - a participant in two modes of expression and of thought, a possessor of two perspectives and ways of interpreting reality. The child being acculturated in English through the school is indeed being socialized to a new and different milieu. With all of this it becomes clear once again that we are not simply dealing with a language "problem" (or better stated, a language "phenomenon"), but with a complex and interesting social situation.

Sociolinguistic Influences upon Testing

The use of improper tests in the evaluation and placement of bilingual and LESA children is unfortunately all too common a practice. Yet correct diagnosis of the child's competence with its concommitant placement and teaching approach are critical to his adjustment and success. This is illustrated dramatica-ly through an anecdote related by the eminent socio-linguist, William Labov, at a Conference held at the State University of New York at Albany several years ago. Labov described how a massive testing program had produced results which indicated that several thousand children in the New York City Schools were gravely deficient in language and conceptual development. These children were primarily Spanish-speaking Puerto Ricans and Blacks, who in their own right are often speakers of another dialect. As was to be expected the tests were administered in English and in a style almost as foreign to Black children as it was for the Puerto Ricans. As a consequence, a curriculum was implemented at a level and in a manner appropriate to the test results. Yet things were not going well. Labov was asked to investigate. He listened carefully to the children in the halls and on the playground. Then he brought in a bunny rabbit which he left in a room with the children while a clandestine tape recorder recorded what transpired. An analysis of the children's speech in these unorthodox "test" situations proved they were capable of the very concepts and linguistic constructs (hypotheticals, negating fact, contrasting, argumentation) not evident on the formal test instruments. Why the discrepancy?

The principal reason for such divergent results is the common failure to acknowledge the extent to which tests are mediated by language. Furthermore, tests are administered in a social situation, also mediated by language. A child, limited in the language of either the test instrument itself or the language of the testing situation, is obviously at a serious disadvantage. What is not so obvious, however, is the degree to which still other factors may also effect the performance of the youngster being examined. For example, factors such as the tester himself (whether of the same background of the child or not), the setting in which the child is tested, the type of test, and the purpose (as perceived by the child) for which he is being presented the tasks at hand, all influence performance. It is now more widely understood how these same factors impact upon language behavior, and it is this understanding which has led us to recognize how the same factors also skew test results. At the very least, three distinct codes may mitigate results - the language or dialect of the child, the language used by the test writer embodied in the test instrument, and the language of the test administrator. To the degree that these match, the greater the reliability of the results; to the degree these differ, the greater the margin

for error.

Another aspect of test situations also deserves comment. It is to be remembered that a test situation is also a fixed situation, one delineated both in space and in time. In this regard it can provide only an extremely limited sampling of the child's abilities. Just as Labov observed the children's varying performance in different contexts, so also have sociolinguistic studies substantiated the variability of speakers' performance in different situations. This is to say that children react differently in speech and in other behavior given the particulars of each social setting. Children, like adults, are guided by the norms they perceive which determines how one should interact, how much to interact, the expectations of each context, and the like. A testing situation then is only one possible setting whose factors affect in a not-so-obvious manner the performance of the child.

The above is not meant to suggest that testing is unnecessary nor unimportant, but rather to expose the limitations of its samplings, mediated by language, and affected further by other circumstances of the social situation. These provide abundant reasons why test results must be interpreted within the greater context of knowledge which the teacher and other school personnel have of the child, based on daily observations in many situations over a period of time. A striking example of reliance upon standardized tests without good judgement occurred recently when a kindergarten teacher in Vermont decided to hold back one little girl whose scores were quite low. When the teacher was queried, she began to recognize the incompatability of the test results with her own observations over the school year. She recalled that despite the child's limited English, she demonstrated superior fine motor skills, conceptual development, and social adjustment. Awe of the standardized test scores led her to doubt her own knowledge of the child, and to an action that would have been prejudicial to the child's future. Assessment is indeed critical, but sound assessment is based on intelligent and careful observation, appropriate use and interpretation of tests, and an understanding of the role of language which mediates in the child's performance and in his relationships with those around him.

Sound assessment is especially critical in schools in which there is no bilingual program. The reason for this is that where no bilingual program exists, it is also to be expected that few, if any, of the school personnel are familiar with bilinguals and bilingual performance. In such schools, LESA children are often first identified by classroom teachers exasperated with the difficulties of dealing with a pupil whose language and culture do not permit him to "fit" into the curriculum as designed. Often there is no one else to provide support or guidance in assisting the LESA child. At times, the English teacher may be engaged, however an English teacher knows only how to teach English (usually grammar and literature) to already English-speaking children. At other times, a foreign language teacher may be consulted, however that person knows only how to teach a foreign language to English-speakers and often lacks an understanding of bilinguals himself. When an ESL Specialist is not available (i.e., a teacher of English as a Second Language), LESA children often find themselves face to face with Special Education teacher, who although professionally trained to deal with many types of learning problems, is seldom prepared to deal with the special circumstances and needs of LESA students. In a recent incident, for example, one Specialist scheduled several children for sessions with a speech therapist, failing to recognize that the "impedient" was a foreign accent.

Although seemingly harmless, the time spent in those unwarranted sessions was time taken away from other productive pursuits, aside from the fact that the accent normally disappears by itself given a little time. Furthermore therapy only drew unneeded additional attention to the "differentness" of the children. Although the children do have need for "special education", it is hardly in the sense most commonly understood. What should be recognized is that their dominant language is not English, that they are of a different cultural background, and that unfortunately, all too often, any difficulties they may have at school may stem from prejudicial and ignorant treatment inflicted upon them because of these differences. This last factor too often constitutes their real impediment to learning.

The Test Instruments

Whereas our understanding of sociolinguistic influences upon testing is important, it is as important to locate and utilize test instruments appropriate to the task. When assessing bilingual and LESA children, we are faced with the paucity of such instruments. The situation is even graver when we seek instruments for children from a variety of language backgrounds which heretofore have not been the focus of much official attention. Whereas tools are becoming increasingly available in Spanish, and others are under development in French and Portuguese they are much more scarce when we consider most of the other fifty or more languages currently included in bilingual programs across the country. For languages not already part of bilingual programs, the situation is near to hopeless.

Criteria to consider when seeking appropriate assessment instruments include the following:

1. First of all, are there available instruments?

2. Are the instruments compatible with the level and background of the children?

3. Are the instruments conceived and/or designed in accordance with the language used in the test, or are they simply translations of an English test? If translations or adaptations, how well were they executed?

4. Do the instruments provide information which will actually be of assistance to the learner, or do they simply fulfill legal requirements for testing?

5. Do they stand up psychometrically?

6. If a test of language, do they assess all aspects of langauge?

7. Do they provide results comparable with those obtained with the instruments used with English-speaking children?

8. Do they provide results which simultaneously meet legal and educational needs?

Aside from locating the instruments - if they exist at all - these questions should be raised when considering among a choice of different measurement tools.

The task of locating, collecting and evaluating measurement tools is obviously not easy. Nonetheless, only appropriate tools will yield the valid results desired. Consultation with persons working in bilingual programs may be an obvious starting point for such a search. Bilingual Resource Centers at universities providing teacher training programs and National Dissemination Centers are other places to seek assistance. As our need is being recognized, more and more instruments are under development. Concurrently, surveys of instruments are being made by several of the National Dissemination and Assessment Centers which will assist greatly in the search. A recent study, for example, by DeAvila and others, disseminated by the California center examines a variety of language tests including both dominance and proficiency types. Their review of 46 such instruments reveals the alarming state at the moment as they carefully describe the characteristics and shortcomings of the tests. As for what to do with the results obtained, only one of the 46 tests provides suggestions for activities or exercises to remedy the problems once identified.

Even after the most appropriate instrument is located, one must still be alert to any hidden problems within the test itself. Sometimes tests are made available without proper piloting beforehand, and even when piloting has been done some flaws may remain undiscovered. Deficiencies are unlikely to be noticed when tests are administered en masse; however, the test administrator working with smaller groups or individual students can often detect flaws by observing and investigating the reactions of the children. Another excellent way, although often forbidden under strict test conditions, is to ask the child to explain his choice especially when it appears to be a blatant contradiction. At times the child's perception may be remarkably different from that of an adult confronted with the same phenomena. For example, in one test intended as a "cultural attitude inventory", it was noticed that several children had difficulty not with the questions, but with the line drawings. A "tortilla" was commonly thought to be a flying saucer, or a cap; a pickle as peanut; whereas a chile pepper was indistinguishable. Furthermore a sketch of an "Anglo" girl was perceived as the same child a few pages later, the only difference being that her face was shaded in. Whereas the artist intended the shading to mark the difference of a Latin child, most of the youngsters completely ignored the coloring and argued that the figure was exactly the same, as it was. Another flaw in the test apparatus was the use of bullfighter on the assumption that Latin youths would more readily identify with this figure than Anglos, further establishing their cultural identification. In actual fact, it is probably true that bullfights are as foreign to Chicano children living in the Southwest as they are to other American youngsters. The stereotype was obviously fixed more in the mind of the test developer than of those being tested.

On a different test designed to measure verbal and conceptual development, individualized attention precluded the responses of one child from being misinterpreted as error. The test contained a series of four pictures on each page, under which a word was written, which was read to the child. The child was to point to the picture which best depicted the word read. When the

word "fastest" was read to one unusually bright child, confronted with choices of pictures of an airplane, a donkey, an elephant, and a car, he unhesitatingly pointed to the elephant. When queried about his strange reply, the child provided a plausible explanation..... "When I'm in an airplane and I look out the window, I see that the plane goes very slow (the child moves his hand across the desk top indicating the approximate speed of the plane flying over the earth). But when I watch Tarzan on television, I see that the elephants run very fast." Having had the experience of being on a plane, this child of five responded to what he actually perceived. Only later, through language, do we learn that planes travel at very high speeds. We accept this as fact despite the impossibility of witnessing this directly. In this case the child was quite sophisticated conceptually but the test results would have proved the opposite.

On a similar test, problems were inherent in the test directions. One direction stated that the child should "Mark the pie that is whole," displaying several drawings of a pie from one that was uncut to one that had several slices missing. It was not uncommon for children to understand that they were to point to the pie which "has a hole" and therefore they indicated the cut pit and were counted wrong. Test directions sometimes work against the children's success. Whereas care is normally taken to insure that the elements being tested are valid, the language used in the directions of the test can just as seriously skew results. Imagine how confusing the following statement can be to the five, six or seven-year-old: "Mark the number that marks the number of elements." Or the statement: "Do not turn this page until told to do so." - so commonly found in testing programs. Those who have studied the child's ability to decode and understand language, know how complex this direction is for young elementary school children. The direction contains three linguistic devices difficult for children: (1) a deletion (the subject "you" omitted); (2) a passive voice construction not commonly grasped by children under seven; and (3) inclusion of both negative and temporal conjunctions (do <u>not</u> turn...<u>until</u>). A better statement for this age group might be: "Turn this page only when I tell you to."

Another factor affecting test results is the experience the child has had in test-taking situations. If the child entered the school along with his peers from kindergarten on, he is as experienced as any. However, if the child is new to the system and has come from another area (a rural area, Puerto Rico, or the like), he may be new to the testing experience in which case it is likely that he is at a disadvantage. His lack of familarity with the procedures and expectations of the situation may constitute a significant variable affecting the results.

Finally, the cultural relevance of a test is increasingly considered by test developers for the bias it may provide. Cultural bias in tests may be as serious as the bias in other didactic materials. Relevance may indeed be the difference between success and failure in both areas. An example from a test used with Navajos in New Mexico may be instructive: "A baker goes with bread, like a plumber goes with what?" The question is followed by a number of choices. Greater relevance might be provided for the Navajo child by a different item, such as: "Silver is to a ring as wool is to what?" (A sheep. A dog. A loom. A rug. A hogan.) This statement serves exactly the same purpose as the previous one. Furthermore it is relevant to the child's experience and precludes

the possibility of failure due to unfamiliar vocabulary in the same way that most Anglo children fail if confronted with the second statement because they lacked knowledge of words such as "loom" and "hogan".

Directions and Suggestions

The task at hand is admittedly a difficult and complex one. The foregoing suggests that teachers of Special Education are being asked in many cases to evaluate children with special needs and to prescribe appropriate courses of action in an area in which, for the most part, they have no training or knowledge. Yet the need does exist and no other school personnel seem any better qualified except in cases where there is a bilingual program. This is so because it is only recently that we have even begun to recognize the special need of bilingual and LESA children. This, of course, is only a first step. Having identified the need, we must now begin to learn more about bilinguals and approaches to their education. In areas where there are concentrations of such students we must have personnel better prepared to deal with their educational situation. Starting with teacher education programs in which special education teachers, and others, are trained, we must begin to address this special population along with our study of other learning problems. We also need to develop better and more instruments for assessing their abilities as well as better and more materials for use in their education. All of this points to the urgency to ameliorate educational approaches for bilingual and LESA children who have been largely ignored up until recently.

Within this context, the special education teacher must nonetheless begin to acknowledge the task which for the moment often falls on too few shoulders. To focus in specifically on the assessment program, some concrete steps can and should be taken. Within the purview of testing, several suggestions are offered:

1. Search for, collect, evaluate and try as many tests as possible which are specifically designed for bilingual and LESA children. Do not blindly administer tests designed for monolingual English populations and expect any degree of validity.

2. Clarify always what it is you want to know about the child, and use tests which will provide you with that information. Is it language dominance or language proficiency you are after, or rather an indication of conceptual, cognitive or intellectual development? Recognize that language always mediates the results of tests, and consider the influences of language upon the results obtained.

3. By all means test children in their dominant tongue when possible. When this is not possible, acknowledge the skewed or unreliable results obtained from tests given in English.

4. Recognize that a testing situation is also a social situation, and that the circumstances of that context often influence the results, especially when the child is uncomfortable or does not identify easily with those circumstances.

5. Consider that tests provide us with only some of the possible indicators of a child's performance. This limited sampling must be interpreted cautiously and in conjunction with observations of the child in a variety of circumstances and at various times. Compile a "portfolio" of the child's performance based on this combined information.

6. Recognize the limitations inherent in the test tools themselves. Do not place blind faith into measurement instruments. Be quick to detect inconsistencies, problems, flaws in instruments which could mitigate against a true demonstration of the child's competence.

7. Distinguish between learning disabilities and no-English ability. Differentiate between special learning problems of various origins from learning hampered by the lack of English. A good question to ask is whether the child would be having a learning problem if he were being educated in his dominant tongue - Greek, Portuguese, Spanish? How well could John Doe learn if he, conversely, were being educated in one of those languages instead of English?

8. Finally, learn more about bilingualism and biculturalism, in an attempt to understand the special circumstances and needs of children from other language and cultural backgrounds. If there is an opportunity, learn a second language, participate in another culture. There is probably no better way to begin to grapple yourself with the problems and the rewards of participating in two world views. As you yourself acquire new perspectives, you will find that there is probably no better way to gain respect for the multiple ways which human beings have devised for relating to, and interpreting our universe.

SPECIAL EDUCATION FOR THE HISPANIC CHILD:

A TEN POINT ACTION PLAN

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Special Education for the Hispanic Child: A Ten Point Action Plan

It is well known that lower-class minority children tend to present a very high density of reading problems; and that Hispanic children (and other minority children with an additional monolingual non-English background) tend to fare still a little worse than most other minority children as to their reading scores. For instance, data of the Boston Public Schools just a couple of years ago showed that the average Hispanic child tended to read 1 year behind norms in 2nd grade and 4 years behind norms in 8th grade; 50% of our children present some sort of reading retardation in 2nd grade; and 90% that is, nearly every one of them are retarded at the 8th grade level. Similar data 10 and 20 years ago in other big cities suggest that little has been achieved in the last decades, and that our American schools (in spite of their wholehearted efforts) are nowhere near to breaking the code of the Hispanic child and solving the long standing and cummulative problem of their reading deficits.

The ominous importance of this high density of reading failure is obvious both in the emotional and occupational adaption of our children. Chronic failure in average children tends to produce either depressive or overactive reactions: thus, it is only sensible to hypothesize that very many of the Hispanic children considered by their teachers and therapists as having emotional problems are just backward readers reacting to their own reading backwardness, and then, much of the effort of our psychologists and social workers may be slightly misplaced. On the other hand, chronic problems of the seriousness of those we are considering here, make it extremely difficult for some children to stay in school, and they may well be forced to drop out of school for self-preservation and in self-defense. Also retarded readers are seriously handicapped in their access to the world of work and in their chances for social progress. Congressman Edgar Badillo has said this of our Hispanic neighbors in New York and of their occupational chances: MANHATTAN IS FULL OF JOBS - BUT OUR KIDS CAN NOT SPELL.

Now that the fact of a reading problem of epidemic proportions is solidly established, what can we do about this fact? Basically, people tend to do one of three things:

1. Deny its validity. "Our children do read well. There is no problem with our children.",

2. Explain it away. "Our children can not read, nothing is the matter; they are just bilingual." In other words, there is a problem but it does not have to be solved, or

3. Try to come up with a solution. And this is what brings us together today. People aware of the impact of early education programs and of reading remedial programs tend to believe in the feasibility of a solution. While people unaware of those solutions tend to become quite defensive, and deny or explain away the problems rather than solving them.

Particularly, just a few years ago, the tendency was still to lower the requirements of the programs and to give every child a passing grade. Obviously, for anybody familiar with reading problems, this is just senseless. No child outgrows a reading problem without specific help; and in my experience with hundreds of children with reading problems, none are more dramatic than those promoted to

an 8th or to a 10th grade while reading at a 2nd to 3rd grade level, and not having received any remedial services (not even Title I reading) during their very many years of school experience. Now, children with learning deficits tend to be referred and diagnosed in 1st grade; but just a few years ago, the suggestion that a Hispanic child may be dyslexic tended to unanimously infuriate very many of our teachers, social workers and even psychologists. In the large world out there, children in regular programs can be bright, less bright, average, dyslexic, retarded and what not. In the bilingual programs of just a few years ago, a bilingual child was just bilingual and don't you dare to suggest something else. Luckily enough, the times have already changed. For years, bilingual children with reading problems were given a long moratorium; and at the end of it, very little could be done with them, even in the hands of very experienced educators. Now on the contrary, teachers are trained to recognize learning disabilities in the elementary grades, and to provide them with the necessary help in the early stages of their difficulty, when help has a maximum probability of being successful.

Now finally it is becoming increasingly clear that the success of the bilingual child (who is very often a monolingual, non-English speaking child from a pre-industrial social setting), is tied both to a bilingual teacher and to a special education teacher. Now it's just a matter of time to find out whether the bilingual special education teacher of the next few years will be a bilingual teacher who has learned a lot about special education, or a special educator who has just discovered that what the bilingual child needs and what you are teaching every day in your classroom may very well be the same thing.

And now let me tell you what the justification is for my being here in this meeting of special educators. I am a diagnostician, a native Spanish speaker from Spain. My involvement with Hispanic children began in 1970 on the island of Puerto Rico, when I was just a newcomer to this hemisphere. My Puerto Rican experience has been extremely useful to me. On the one hand, what you call urban children and what they call rural children are, as you know, very much the same children; after all, it takes a rural child to make an urban one. On the other hand, Puerto Rican schools have been successfully dealing with their problems much longer than you have, so you may have one or two things to learn from them. For instance, on the proportion of disabled children in their school population or on the relative importance of bilingualism as a disabling factor; published data, and my own experience in a rural Puerto Rican village, suggests that 25% of the elementary school children are considered disabled and referred for diagnosis. (When those same children come to the mainland, the proportion of referrals falls to close to zero percent. And from now on, the child's problems will be considered as just a cultural phenomenon. This means, probably, that mainland schools are way behind the island schools in their concern for children. And that we are trying much less harder than they are.) Another aspect of the island's schools is that children are not expected to know English; thus, the fact of not knowing English is never considered as the main reason for their disability. While any language disabled child landing in Boston is certain to be immediately considered a victim of bilingualism, as soon as he/she has spent a couple of months in our schools.

I came to the Boston area in 1972, and I have been involved with our rural-urban children since then. At the beginning I was just administering the old tests everybody had been administering for the past forty years but you don't have to blame me; that's the way we psychologists are trained, and it may take a while to learn otherwise. In fact, my first year in Boston as a Harvard

clinical fellow at the City Hospital, showed me how hopelessly useless our clinical instruments tend to be. My feeling about this became so strong, that for a couple of years I openly refused to test any children, and I preferred to spend my time at school doing consultation or community intervention. It was also at this time that I began asking questions and finding alternate responses. Thus, in 1975, I was able to start at Children's Hospital Medical Center, under the aegis of Dr. Melvin Levine, a Spanish School Function clinic where traditional testing was abandoned and replaced by developmental measures, neuropsychological measures, achievement tests and modality tests. These measures are administered by a team consisting of a pediatrician, a psychologist and a nurse. Testing an individual child usually takes some 4 to 5 hours and has humorously but precisely been described by a friend of mine as "diagnostic overkill". Still, three years of diagnostic overkill have at least the advantage of having allowed us to gather multiple diagnostic data on some 300 children with educational difficulties; roughly one half of all the Hispanic children referred for educational testing in the city of Boston. Since one half is without any doubt a valid sample of the population of children in need, I think that the recommendations made by my clinic can also be valid for a large number of children; and that you may be interested in knowing about them. Still, I am not asking you to accept them; I am just asking you to keep them in mind for awhile, just in case that someday in the future they begin to make sense to you.

After all, state and federal laws, and parental and teacher advocacy are developing at such a rate that before long we won't be able to explain away the problems of our children and we will have to solve them. At that time, you are sure to receive very many, or even huge numbers of referrals of Hispanic children, and it will be good for you, the planners of programs, to know how to deal with them.

So let me forget for awhile that I am a diagnostician, and let's imagine that suddenly I have become you, a planner of services and strategies. If my experience during the past eight years is valid at all, this is my action plan, the things that I would plan to do. If any of them look too unrealistic or too advanced, you just have to wait and see. This is the time for Special Education, and your chance will be wasted if you don't have enough imagination to plan for new programs for new children with new problems. And without more preamble - here we go.

First Point - - Don't wait for the problems to set in; plan for an early delivery of services; organize early childhood and preschool programs; plan for well structured, sequentially organized programs, creating order and routine. Put your emphasis on language, whether English or Spanish; and use systematic, well organized curricula rather than just teacher made materials. Don't wait until materials well organized in Spanish are produced: any of the basic curricula will do. (In the book of Celia S. Lavatelli you will find a good comparison between the most frequently used curricula, their advantages and limitations.) Target on Language, published by the Christ's Church in Bethesda, MD, is easy to adapt and has all the materials necessary for the organization of a complete curriculum.

Second Point - - Extend language programs (whether in Spanish or in English) to the home environment. This can be done either by involving the mother with the school programs or by setting up home stimulation programs. Home stimulation

programs have already been successfully used in this state in a number of cities and townships. They often use volunteers who visit the home demonstrating to the mother the use of toys and image books as tools for language development; they bring new books or toys at each visit. Several home stimulation programs can be easily implemented, and their creators may provide training, consultation and even a research structure to document the effects of the program. (For instance, Dr. Levenstin, of Mineola, N.Y.). Other home stimulation programs can be organized with adolescents as the source of stimulation, thus converting the program into a job program for high school students. Of course stimulation can be provided either by Anglo or by Hispanic adolescents. In some neighborhoods where volunteers may not dare to visit, adolescents from the same population or the same building can be used. The use of adolescents is likely to have measurable influence on the language development of two generations - or even develop the parenting skills of adolescents with a traditionally high rate of fertility.

Third Point - - Create problem solving curricula to make the interpersonally dependent child more sensitive to information, to objectives, to alternative means and to mental rehearsal of possible developments. Several problem solving curricula are already available, and one of them has even been translated into Spanish and is now applied to children from ages four and on at the Hahnemann Hospital in Philadelphia.

Fourth Point - - Create extracurricular enrichment programs in an English or Spanish-speaking environment. After school programs and summer programs are indicated, and can provide a mixture of tutorial and recreational activities. In a social class of split families, those programs can offer to adolescent and mainly to males, the exposure to non-overindulgent, non-authoritarian adult role models; and an exposure to peers in situations of group problem solving, as sources of consensus and of information. After school programs can be as effective as traditional therapy, and add a lot to our children's lives. In addition, as very many of my recommendations, they can be set up without the use of school money, through consultation with other agencies or under the form of consortia. I consider this point as particularly important; for very many children, the real objective is to establish a 12 month a year educational program with at least 4 hours a week more than what the school can usually offer.

Fifth Point - - Focus on reading: curriculum. As you may know, practically all bilingual programs in this state use a look-say reading curriculum. (By the way, this look-say reading curriculum has been practically abandoned in Puerto Rico, and children are taught phonics.) You, as specialists, are aware of some of the disadvantages of the look-say approach in children with reading programs; they tend to become "word guessers", rely on the context, and become nearly unable to read isolated words. My own data suggests that, when this is the case (as it is often the case in our population) there is practically no progress from childhood to adolescence; that is, the child may never learn any word-attack skills. It is even thinkable that very many of the reading problems of the whole population may be attributed to just a mismatch between the skills used by the child and the methods used to teach him or her. As you know, whenever a child has a reading problem, the tendency of the reading specialist is to use a two-step remedial program; first, switching to phonics and then, whenever phonics do not work, switching to multisensorial approaches. Chances are that Hispanic children with reading problems may be stuck in look-say

approaches forever, and this is one of the reasons why your skills as special educators are so valuable to our children. While we are at it, it may be of interest to you that there are just two phonics curricula in Spanish; one, of the Cartilla Fonetica de Puerto Rico, and another, a very recent one, the Barbara Crane method published in Camden, N. J..

Sixth Point - - Focus on reading: programs. As you know, there are three different sources of teaching reading in our schools. One is the regular classroom financed with city money, another is Title I, financed by the federal government; and now you must add 766 money for remedial services, financed with state funds. Still, it is important to realize that there is very little coordination among these three programs, and that Special Education specialists are not likely to be used as consultants for the decisions effecting either Title I or the regular classroom. Thus, a child failing to learn the look-say approach (a word-guesser, without any word-attack skills) is likely to be sent to a Title I program, where he will be given look-say work forever. Now it is sadly obvious to me that look-say methods are not the only solution, and that look-say methods may not even be the best solutions for very many children. It is also obvious to me that very many children in Title I do not need more of the same, but something entirely different. Thus, I think that sooner or later you will have to have your say in the choice of remedial approaches and that just out of common sense, Title I will have to be coordinated to you sooner or later. I can even imagine a regular classroom using phonics then, a Title I program using multisensorial approaches, and 766 programs kept only for the most extremely difficult reading cases. But first, one of you will have to try and get elected to our school committee. (By the way, a reading specialist is already a member of a school committee in a town of Massachusetts that I will not mention. Just wait and see . . .)

Seventh Point - - Focus on reading: the transfer of skills. Another interesting aspect of reading is the transfer of skills when a person reading in one language learns how to read in a second language, and this is an area where you probably will have to develop additional skills, (unless of course, E.S.L. people decide to develop skills in reading, which may not be bad at all). One basic aspect is for instance, that a child having learned Spanish through a look-say approach will have nothing to transfer from Spanish into English; the reading task is absolutely different in this second language, and entirely different strategies become necessary. Thus the hopelessness of very many Hispanic children in our schools, having learned some basic skills just to discover that their skills become obsolete the moment they have to switch to English. A compulsive guesser will have to become more so, and a bit-by-bit reader may well be stuck after the first letter of the word, and unable to blend even two letters. Now look at the opposite activity: spelling. The Hispanic child who knows how to spell in Spanish knows that you do not have to use your memory for words at all; you just analyze the sounds and write them down one by one. This will always work in Spanish and will never work in English. And this is the educational trap we have prepared for our kids. Thus, I consider a first task of our future bilingual special educators is to define the patterns of mistakes of our children, and to help them unlearn the strategies that produce those mistakes. My immediate guess is that phonics and multisensorial approaches are probably the methods that will help most in this direction.

Eighth Point - - Focus on reading: the missing skills. When we talk about a first and a second language, we talk as if they were just comparable; but the fact is than English and Spanish are not comparable at all. For instance, an

English speaker learning Spanish will have no trouble with our phonic's system and some trouble with our syntax; while children learning English from Spanish may have little or no trouble with the syntax, but are likely to stumble forever on their phonics; the way their parents do, the way I do, and the way so many of you do too. Thus, it may not be unnecessary for you to devise a short curriculum based entirely on the missing sounds, how to differentiate them and how to pronounce them. I won't have the time to develop this today, but you can be sure that three months of differential training may well be the key to our children's language and reading progress; but nobody has thought of doing it before. Some aspects of the program will certainly have to be: vowels, final consonants, high pitched consonant sounds, high-pitched voiced sounds, and consonant blends (particularly final consonant blends). I want you to know something that may surprise you; namely, that a child may be a reader in Spanish, but dyslexic in English; and that even a child who can read in Spanish may need reading remediation when going into English. Think about this; in Spanish, reading problems are as frequent in girls as in boys; in English, reading problems are 5 to 8 times more frequent in boys, probably because of the level of skills involved, and of the quicker auditory-linguistic development of girls, as compared to boys. The implications of this fact are enormous. As you know, very many adults, and maybe I should include myself among them) will never be able to speak English correctly without help because our ears do not hear the sounds, and our mouths can not pronounce the sounds we do not hear. Our linguistic experience may have familiarized us with a level of phonetic analysis which is, in your terms, the equivalent of some sort of mild aural-oral disability. This will not be reflected in our primary language, the one we have overlearned. But this may hinder the learning of any second language for very many of us, children and adults, and this is most certainly one of your future tasks.

Ninth Point - - Focus on reading: tutoring. All programs using volunteers and peer tutors have been successful. Jerome Kagan believes that all of the reading problems of our children can be solved by just enough number of peer tutors and volunteer tutors and tutor-to-student ratio of 1 to 4. I very well know that there are no unions of volunteers nor unions of peers to push their functions; still, I think that someday you will have to think about them. Ten volunteers under the direction of one special education teacher can be nearly as good as ten special education teachers.

Tenth Point - - Teacher training. At the present moment, children with reading problems can receive a lot from teachers and special education teachers, and very little from psychologists, psychiatrists and other mental health diagnosticians or professionals. I think that our training has made us selectively blind to very many of the most basic dimensions of individual performance, and that it may take a lot of retraining (and certainly a change of awareness) to get us to do the job we are supposed to do. While this happens, I would suggest that the teachers should be made aware of their diagnostic abilities. The teacher has spent so many hours with the child, that her observations can easily become the main factor in the diagnosis of a learning disability. In my own clinic, teachers are asked to fill a very long descriptive questionnaire, and very often a diagnosis is entirely possible after just checking this teacher questionnaire. I think it's absolutely essential.

A. To develop the reading competencies of the special subject teachers, particularly at the middle to high school levels. After all, the pattern of reading and spelling mistakes is at this time the best of all possible

diagnostic informations; with the pattern of arithmetic mistakes coming behind as a close second. Without those skills, the understanding of learning problems becomes impossible. And learning problems are frequent enough at the middle and high school level to make this additional investment in teacher-training particularly worthwhile.

B. To develop the diagnostic competencies of all teachers, but mainly those at the elementary school level. My own data suggests that there are up to a dozen of clear predictive signs of diminished school performance, and I think that all the teachers dealing with urban Hispanic children have an active interest in knowing them. The problem here may be that your education has taught you to pay a lot of attention to visual perceptual problems, while the problems of the urban child are very often in the areas of language and of oral-graphomotor sequential movement. Thus, there is a risk on misdirecting our special education efforts by just applying to a different population the things we already know. While more research is certainly necessary, my data points toward a series of factors which may help differentiate children with learning problems in our urban Hispanic population. A tentative list of those factors could be as follows:

1. LANGUAGE: speech sound perception, syntactic comprehension, naming, naming of colors, memory for sentences, memory of commands.

2. SEQUENCING: speech sound blending, eye tracking, finger movements, automatized series, computation.

3. VISUAL: visual closure, visual memory

4. RIGHT-LEFT ORGANIZATION: unimanual tasks, bimanual tasks, lateralization, directionality.

Those are my ten points. You do not have to take them as final. We are all beginners, and in a few years we will certainly know a lot more about the topic. At this time, our action plans would probably be quite different.

I have only tried to show you that our children in the urban Hispanic population have serious learning problems and what those problems are. Many of them relate to limited early experience, lack of positive role models, limited school impact, obsolete teaching methods, faulty transfer of skills and experience from English to Spanish plus the added impact of bilingualism, the greater phonetic and articulatory complexity of English and the higher complexity of English as a written language. I have also attempted to show that, although nobody ever has all the solutions for any one problem, you, special education specialists, may have a repertory of methods and techniques which may clearly benefit your bilingual colleagues. I am suggesting that Bilingual Special Education is the normal, adequate, necessary outgrowth of a growing bilingual program.

My suggestions involved a lot of reading technicalities (a serious basal problem that has never been coped with in an adequate way in the past history of our schools) but also a lot of supportive services that can be provided by agencies other than the schools, and with other than just school money.

I have also pointed towards some differences between the diagnostic and educational

principles used in mainland schools and in Puerto Rican schools, and expressed my strong suspicion that mainland schools may have overlooked or misnamed some of the real dimensions of our children's educational problems (starting with the proportion of children in need and with the importance of basic language and speech problems as opposed to just difficulties in second language acquisition.) And that it may be quite useful to develop better communication and exchange of information, not only between bilingual and special education teachers, but also between the island and the mainland.

VOCATIONAL EDUCATION FOR THE BILINGUAL STUDENT WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

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Vocational Education for the Bilingual Student with Special Needs

Bilingual vocational education can be an effective vehicle for integrating the bilingual student who has special needs into learning and working situations of the normal population. Considering the high percentage of students in general who graduate from high school without skills or direction, it is certainly a necessary area for educators to pursue. This need for vocational training can be filled both by creating new programs specifically designed for bilingual special needs students and by adding strong bilingual components to already existing programs.

The Occupational Resource Center (ORC), a vocational school located at 240 Heath Street, Jamaica Plain, MA 02130, includes both types of programs. As part of the Boston Public Schools, it operates on a half-day basis in conjunction with the other city high schools. Students attend the ORC for 2¼ hours each day, studying skills such as Cosmetology, Food Service, Business Skills, Fashion Design, and Nursing Assistant, and then return to their "home high schools" to take related academic courses. Students receive a certificate when they finish a program, and are helped with both job and post-secondary school placements. There are five bilingual programs at the ORC, along with a bilingual instructional and support staff.

Bilingual special needs students are serviced in two ways at the ORC. They are mainstreamed into the regular bilingual programs, or they participate in our Bilingual Food Service Worker course, which was designed to meet the needs of these students. Admission to programs at the ORC is based primarily on the student's interest in an occupational field, and should be included in his/her Educational Plan. Besides the regular curriculum and a supervised practicum at a job site, all students are encouraged to participate in a work/study program. The basic studies which students have at their home school should complement and reinforce the ORC training. Close coordination between the vocational instructor and academic teachers is essential.

To maximize the skill training that students receive at the ORC, a proposal has been written to establish a Special Education Support Team with bilingual capability at the school. The team will include a Special Needs Program Manager, a Job Placement Counselor, and two classroom aides, who will assist the ORC staff to individualize and modify curriculum and programs for special needs students. They will also monitor student progress in skill development areas, create new clinical site experiences, and establish an effective linkage between the ORC and home schools.

Besides the ORC, there are some other models which have been recently developed to service the bilingual student with special needs. At the McKinley school in Boston, three programs which have strong bilingual components will soon be in operation. They include a Pre-vocational Exploratory Program which prepares students to enter vocational schools, a Satellite Occupational Program which will train 16 to 22 year olds in Food Services, Landscaping, and Building Trades, and an Open-door Exploratory program for drop-outs. At the Keefe Vocational Technical School in Framingham, a Title VI Career Exploratory Program for bilingual special needs students will be mainstreaming students into various shop areas.

There are many problems which must be confronted when beginning a program geared specifically for the bilingual student with special needs. First, many students

enter high school without knowing what their real interests are. To prevent this, career education should begin at a very early grade, and students should participate in exploratory programs before choosing a specific vocational skill. Secondly, vocational education is often used as a general "dumping ground", without considering the student's expressed interests or capabilities. A vocational instructor or counselor, therefore, should always be included on the Core Evaluation Team to recommend the appropriateness of a particular training course. Before making a final recommendation, it would be beneficial to allow the student to participate for a few days in the program being considered.

Finding instructors who have three orientations (bilingual, vocational, and special education) is difficult. Aides must be hired and in-service training should be provided for teachers. Problems will also be encountered in the area of job development and with the heterogeneity of language and learning abilities within the classroom.

A lot of research and planning must go into setting up a bilingual vocational program for special needs students, and one must be prepared to convince people of the need for it. It is important to coordinate between departments in the school system, and involve the Special Education Department, Personnel, Occupational Education, Bilingual Department, etc. Finally, it probably makes more sense to meet the regional needs of an area through centralization, rather than setting up scattered, smaller programs.

Although we have come a long way in servicing our bilingual students with special needs, there is still work to be done and many questions to be answered. By exchanging ideas, examples, and mistakes, we can work together to create new programs and to improve the ones we already have.